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10/820,865	04/09/2004	Takahiro Watanabe	2004-0533A	8703

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EXAMINER

TIV, BACKHEAN

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2151

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11/26/2007

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/820,865

Applicant(s)

WATANABE ET AL.

Examiner

Backhean Tiv

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 09 April 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 09 April 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 4/04, 5/04.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

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Detailed Action

Claims 1-20 are pending in this application.

Priority

Acknowledgment is made of applicant's claim for foreign priority under 35

U.S.C. 119(a)-(d).

Drawings

The Drawings filed on 4/9/04 are acceptable.

Information Disclosure Statement

The information disclosure statement (IDS) submitted on 4/9/04, 12/7/04, has been considered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claims 1-2,6-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by US Publication 2003/0095524 issued to Stephens et al.(Stephens).

As per claim 1, Stephens teaches an information management apparatus for managing service-related information in a system in which a plurality of electronic apparatuses are linked via network so as to work in liaison with each other to implement

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a desired service(Abstract, Fig.4-8), the apparatus comprising: a service-specific information acquisition section for acquiring service-specific information which is related to a combination of types of electronic apparatuses required for implementing a service(para.0028,0050, 0053, Figs.1-12); a storage section for storing at least one piece of service-specific information acquired by the service-specific information acquisition section(para.0050,0057, Fig.14); an apparatus-specific information acquisition section for acquiring apparatus-specific information which is related to each of the plurality of electronic apparatuses(para.0026,0028,claim 1, Fig.14); a request reception section for receiving search requests from the electronic apparatuses(para.0069-0072); a search section for, responsive to a search request received by the request reception section, searching for the service, which can be implemented by the electronic apparatuses, based on the service-specific information stored in the storage section and the apparatus-specific information acquired by the apparatus-specific information(para.0069-0072); and a transmission section for transmitting to the electronic apparatuses a search result which is information indicating a listing of services which can be implemented by the electronic apparatuses(para.0073).

As per claim 2, the information management apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the service-specific information further contains information related to an application operable on each of the electronic apparatuses and used for implementing the service(para.0073).

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As per claim 6, the information management apparatus according to claim 1, wherein: a server for managing the service-specific information is present on the network; the apparatus-specific information acquisition section acquires the apparatus-specific information associated with the electronic apparatuses from the electronic apparatuses; and the service-specific information acquisition section acquires the service-specific information from the server(Fig.1, para. 0032).

As per claim 7, the information management apparatus according to claim 6, further comprising: an inquiry section for inquiring of the server whether the service-specific information stored in the storage section has been updated; and a notification section for, if a result of the inquiry by the inquiry section indicates an update of the service-specific information, notifying the electronic apparatuses the service-specific information has been updated(para.0070,0080,0090).

As per claim 8, the information management apparatus according to claim 7, wherein the inquiry section makes an inquiry to the server at regular intervals(para.0070,0080,0090).

As per claim 9, the information management apparatus according to claim 7, further comprising an update section for, if a result of the inquiry by the inquiry section indicates an update of the service-specific information, updating the service-specific information stored in the storage section(para.0070,0080,0090).

As per claim 10, the information management apparatus according to claim 1, wherein: the apparatus-specific information acquisition section acquires the apparatus-specific information associated with the electronic apparatuses from the electronic

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apparatuses(para.0058); and the service-specific information acquisition section acquires the service-specific information from the electronic apparatuses(para.0069)

As per claim 11, the information management apparatus according to claim 1, wherein: the information related to the combination of the types of the electronic apparatuses which is contained in the service-specific information is related to a combination of models of the electronic apparatuses(Fig.7; different types of printer, para.0075); the information management apparatus further comprises a specification section which refers to the service-specific information stored in the storage section and related to the service to be implemented by the electronic apparatuses, and specifies a model of one electronic apparatus which works in liaison with another electronic apparatus to implement the service(Fig.1, Fig.12, para.0075); and the transmission section transmits information which indicates the electronic apparatuses specified by the specification section to the electronic apparatuses which are used to implement the service(Abstract, para.0075).

As per claim 12, the information management apparatus according to claim 2, further comprising: a cease confirmation section for confirming the presence or absence of a ceased service corresponding to the service-specific information stored in the storage section; and a request section for, if the cease confirmation section determines that there is the ceased service among services associated with the service-specific information stored in the storage section, requesting the electronic apparatuses having stored therein an application associated with the ceased service to delete the application therefrom(para.0082,0090).

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As per claim 13, the information management apparatus according to claim 2, further comprising: a cease confirmation section for confirming the presence or absence of a ceased service corresponding to the service-specific information stored in the storage section; and a deletion section for, if the cease confirmation section determines that there is the ceased service among services associated with the service-specific information stored in the storage section, deleting the service-specific information associated with the ceased service from the storage section(para.0082,0090).

As per claim 14, the information management apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising: an apparatus-specific information storage section for storing the apparatus-specific information acquired by the apparatus-specific information acquisition section; and an information deletion section for, responsive to a request from the electronic apparatus, deleting the apparatus-specific information stored in the apparatus-specific information storage section(para.0082,0090).

As per claim 15, the information management apparatus according to claim 14, wherein the information deletion section, responsive to the request from the electronic apparatuses, deletes the apparatus-specific information while deleting service-specific information related to services for which the electronic apparatuses associated with the deleted apparatus-specific information are used from among service-specific information related to services which can be implemented by the electronic apparatuses(para.0082,0090).

As per claim 16, the information management apparatus according to claim 1, wherein: when an additional electronic apparatus is added anew to the system,

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the apparatus-specific information acquisition section acquires from the additional electronic apparatus information related to a user of the additional electronic apparatus together with the apparatus-specific information(para.0075-0078); and the information management apparatus further comprises: a user information management section for managing user-related information(para.0078); a user authentication section for determining whether to register the apparatus-specific information acquired by the user information management section using the user-related information managed by the user information management section and the user-related information acquired by the apparatus-specific information acquisition section(para.00780; and an apparatus-specific information storage section for, if the user authentication section determines to register the apparatus-specific information, storing the apparatus-specific information acquired by the apparatus-specific information acquisition section(para.0075-0078).

As per claim 17, the information management apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising: an apparatus-specific information storage section for storing apparatus-specific information transmitted from and associated with the electronic apparatuses; and an apparatus determination section for determining whether the apparatus-specific information corresponding to the electronic apparatuses associated with the service-specific information obtained by the search section is stored in the apparatus-specific information storage section(para.0072-0074).

As per claim 18, the information management apparatus according to claim 17, further comprising an absent electronic apparatus notification section for, if the apparatus determination section determines that the apparatus-specific information

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corresponding to a type of an electronic apparatus associated with the service-specific information obtained by the search section is not stored in the apparatus-specific information storage section, notifying the electronic apparatuses, which have provided as search request, of the type of the electronic apparatus corresponding to the apparatus-specific information which is not stored in the apparatus-specific information storage section(para.0075).

As per claim 19, the information management apparatus according to claim 17, wherein if the apparatus determination section determines that the apparatus-specific information corresponding to the type of the electronic apparatus associated with the service specific information obtained by the search section, the storage section does not store the service-specific information obtained by the search section(para.0075).

As per claim 20, Stephens teaches an information management method for managing service-related information in a system in which a plurality of electronic apparatuses are linked via a network to work in liaison with each other to implement a desired service(Abstract, Fig.4-8), the method comprising:

a service-specific information acquisition step for acquiring service-specific information related to a combination of types of electronic apparatuses required for implementing the service(para.0028,0050, 0053, Figs.1-12);

a storage step for storing the service-specific information acquired by the service-specific information acquisition step into a storage section(para.0050,0057, Fig.14);

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an apparatus-specific information acquisition step for acquiring the apparatus-specific information related to each of the plurality of the electronic apparatuses(para.0026,0028,claim 1, Fig.14);

a request reception step for receiving a search request from the electronic apparatuses(para.0069-0072);

a search step for, in response to the search request received by the request reception step, searching services which can be implemented by the electronic apparatuses based on the service-specific information stored in the storage section and the apparatus-specific information acquired by the apparatus-specific information acquisition step(para.0069-0072);

and a transmission step for transmitting to the electronic apparatuses a search result which is obtained by the search step and is information indicating a listing of services which can be implemented by the electronic apparatuses(para.0073).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

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Claims 3-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Publication 2003/0095524 issued to Stephens et al.(Stephens) in view of US Publication 2002/0140966 issued to Meade, II et al.(Meade)

Stephens teaches all the limitation of claim 2, however does not explicitly teach as per claim 3, the information management apparatus according to claim 2, further comprising an update notification section for, if the information related to the apparatus indicates an update of the application, notifying the electronic apparatuses that the application has been updated.

Meade teaches notifying users of software updates and downloading the software updates(Abstract, para.0006-0009)

Therefore it would have been obvious to one ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the teachings of Stephens to include notifying and updating software as taught by Meade in order to have up to date software for a device.

One ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to combine the teachings of Stephens and Meade in order to the most up to date software for a device.

As per claim 4, the information management apparatus according to claim 3, further comprising an application acquisition section for, if the information related to the application indicates that an updated version of the application is available, acquiring the updated version of the application, wherein when the electronic apparatuses are notified of the update of the application, if the electronic apparatuses provide the transmission section with a notice for downloading the updated application, the

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transmission section transmits the updated application to the electronic apparatuses(Meade, Abstract, para.0006-0009). Motivation to combine set forth in claim 3.

As per claim 5, the information management apparatus according to claim 2, further comprising: a latest application acquisition section for acquiring a latest application associated with service-specific information stored in the storage section; and an application storage section for storing the latest application acquired by the latest application acquisition section, wherein the transmission section, responsive to a request from the electronic apparatuses, transmits to the electronic apparatuses the latest application to be used by the electronic apparatuses to implement the service(Meade, Abstract, para.0006-0009). Motivation to combine set forth in claim 3.

Conclusion

Examiner's Note: Examiner has cited particular columns and line numbers in the references as applied to the claims above for the convenience of the applicant.

Although the specified citations are representative of the teachings of the art and are applied to the specific limitations within the individual claim, other passages and figures may apply as well. It is respectfully requested from the applicant in preparing responses, to fully consider the references in its entirety as potentially teaching of all or part of the claimed invention.


The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. See PTO-892.

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Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Backhean Tiv whose telephone number is (571) 272-5654. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 6:30-3:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Follansbee can be reached on (571) 272-3964. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.


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